

# **NYS Developmental Disabilities Planning Council Full Council Meeting Minutes June 18, 2020**

## **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

The meeting was called to order via WebEx at 9:37 a.m. by Chairperson James Traylor. The meeting participant list appears at the end of this document, pages 8-9.

Since this meeting was held remotely due to COVID-19, Jessica Pidgeon explained that voting on the meeting motions will be made through a roll call, where each official voting member is individually called upon to cast their vote.

### Question:

- Are call-in users allowed to vote?
  - Yes, State policies were amended to accept call-in and online voting during COVID-19 social distancing orders.

## **February 2020 Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Minutes approved as presented.

A motion was made to approve the minutes by James Traylor. The motion was seconded by David Feickert.

DDPC Members voted to approve the minutes through roll call vote.

## **Presentation and Discussion on Day Services**

- Katherine Marlay, Deputy Commissioner, Division of Policy and Program Development, Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)

James Traylor introduced the speaker and topic, explaining the current climate of Day Service Programs (Day Hab) during the COVID-19 crisis.

Deputy Commissioner Katherine Marlay provided updates on the closing and potential reopening of OPWDD day services and programs. She also provided utilization and demographic data on people being served by day programs and supports across New York State.

The presentation ended with a conversation about potential options that OPWDD is considering as part of future reopening plans.

## **Member Discussion included the following:**

- Question: Does OPWDD plan to assist voluntary provider agencies with testing and the like?

- The Deputy Commissioner noted that they are still in the process of discussing the various elements of a reopening plan.
- Question: How do you support someone who is noncompliant in ways like not willing or able to wear a mask, not able to maintain a safe distance from others, and so on?
  - There are many people who will not wear masks. OPWDD's plan is to serve the person safely and according to person-centered planning. Everyone will all have to think about the range of supports needed for people, such as those who are willing and able to wear a mask compared to those who are not.
- Question: Has OPWDD looked at what other states have done for not just the logistics of opening our current Day Services model but also looking at more individualized day services or alternatives to Day programs?
  - When the pause on day services began, OPWDD turned toward individuals with IDD and their families to determine how to best support program recipients and families. In-home technology has been one of the main ways people have been able to continue to receive supports and services during the shutdown. She noted a next step will be gathering further input from provider organizations, individuals, and families, to determine what is working well and what might be able to be considered in the future. It is especially important to understand the state of the DSP workforce.
- Question: Is the current strategy to have residential individuals receive Day programs in their home and more community individuals use Day services on sites?
  - The Deputy Commissioner noted that those not receiving any services should be the agency's focus, and the supports need to be distributed fairly among OPWDD service recipients.
- Question: Has assistive technology (AT) been considered?
  - It will be a critical piece. OPWDD wants to hear from individuals and families about what has and has not worked with AT.
- Question: A NYS Senator wrote a letter to the Commissioner of OPWDD concerning available funds through the CARES Act. James was wondering whether these funds could go to provider organizations for purchasing personal protective equipment (PPE) as they consider reopening.
  - Some CARES Act funding to NYS has been made available for PPE for the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) providers.

## **Executive Committee Report and Motions**

Jennifer Dahlstrom delivered the Executive Committee Report. Four motions were presented for consideration.

**MOTION 1: To award up to \$300,000 for 2 years to various grantees to assist individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), their family members and the IDD service delivery system to assist in their response to the Coronavirus Pandemic.**

No recusals were made. Lisa Meyer-Fertal made the motion. Deirdre Staley seconded the motion.

James Huben presented background information about the proposed project. This project would establish a systemic framework for the DDPC to address both immediate and ongoing concerns resulting from COVID-19 for self-advocates, families, and the service delivery system.

**Member Discussion/Questions included the following:**

- Question: How quickly can these grants get up and running?
  - Approximately September 2020, depending on the size of the project and how long DDPC leaves open the application process. The smaller the grant project, the quicker it will be up and running.

**DDPC members voted to approve the motion.**

**MOTION 2: To set aside the amount of (up to) \$1.2 million (\$400,000 per year for 3 years) to award a single grantee through a competitive RFP process for a comprehensive housing initiative.**

No recusals were made. Deirdre Staley made the motion. David Feickert seconded the motion.

Vicky Hiffa provided background information about the proposed project. In the 2022-2026 DDPC State Plan, this project will further the efforts of the Regional Housing Collaboratives (RHC) where the NY Alliance is working with select individuals throughout the State to find, secure, and maintain independent<sup>1</sup> housing opportunities. From the RHC project, three additional areas of need emerged for future work. These areas will be the focus of this grant. These areas include:

1. Addressing the cultural bias on independent housing for individuals with IDD,
2. Developing a comprehensive set of noncertified housing resources specific to each NYS region, and
3. Educating and collaborating with direct service provider organizations on repurposing their assets into independent program supports and housing opportunities for the people they support.

Member Discussion included the following:

- Question: What are the goals and parameters of the RFP?
  - There are several intended outcomes of this grant. One outcome is to educate individuals with IDD and their families/caregivers on housing opportunities outside of OPWDD. A second outcome is to increase the number of opportunities for non-certified settings.
- Question: Has there been any discussion around working with developers or the creation of housing?

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<sup>1</sup> Housing opportunities outside of OPWDD systems (i.e., non-certified housing)

- Increasing the number of new housing options would be a task assigned to the grantee. This task would be fulfilled by the grantee helping provider organizations repurpose their unused, costly assets.
- Question: Would the grantee help with training on how to get your own home and/or transition from certified to non-certified housing opportunities?
  - Yes, in fact, the 2022 to 2026 State Plan Survey respondents claimed they want more training on independent housing opportunities.
- Question: What would be the housing initiative that is being offered?
  - The main initiative would be sharing information and changing families' and providers' mindset around non-certified settings.
- Comment: When we're looking at cultural bias, DDPC should also look at all obstacles to affordable, non-certified housing.
- Comment: Part of the stigma is also changing the language of how group homes are perceived. A group home is a home.
- Comment: The grantee must consider non-English speakers, people from diverse backgrounds, and the like, especially those living in OPWDD Regions 4 and 5.

**DDPC members voted to approve the motion.**

**MOTION 3: To set aside the amount of \$150,000 per year for 3 years (\$450,000 total) for one grantee to develop a training curriculum on serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) who identify as LGBTQ and delivering that training to Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) and other key staff across NYS.**

No recusals were made. Lisa Severino made the motion. Susan Hetherington seconded the motion.

Jackie Hayes provided background information about the proposed project which will increase community inclusion. The grantee will develop a comprehensive training for direct support staff (DSPs) and other professionals on the identifications and what they mean, as well as the needs of people who identify as LGBTQ. Also, the grantee will be tasked with directing individuals with IDD who identify as LGBTQ to resource groups such as PrideAbility (DDPC's previous LGBTQ project.)

Member Discussion included the following:

- Question: Will psychologists be involved?
  - Yes, because the trainings will help DSPs and other professionals to be able to link individuals with IDD to mental health professionals.
- Comment: This is not a focus of this, but I think there is a need for training or discussions with Pride Centers about how to include people with disabilities.
- Question: Is there a way to also educate others on the cultural differences regarding sexual identification?
  - Yes, there are ways to engage in various cultural groups. Advocacy groups, who will be a part of this project, are an excellent resource for this.

- Comment: Here, technology is another great tool since many people who identify as LGBTQ may live in rural areas where support organizations are not as prevalent

**DDPC members voted to approve the motion.**

**MOTION 4: To award up to \$150,000 a year for two years to the Rural Health Network of South-Central NY to develop and implement a regional travel training curriculum for individuals with IDD to learn how to most effectively utilize the transportation resources in their communities.**

No recusals were made. Lisa Severino made the motion. Lisa Meyer-Fertal seconded the motion.

Kimberly Berg presented background information about this motion. With the implementation of this project, Rural Health Network of South-Central NY would train individuals with IDD on travel options in their area in relation to where they would like to go, how they would like to get there, and what their travel needs are—all based on the individuals' travel wants and needs.

Member Discussion included the following:

- Members noted that it is great that the potential grantee took extra steps to increase their probability of obtaining the grant and, more importantly, making the grant project successful.
- Question: On June 18, 2020, a local news station discussed travel obstacles during the coronavirus pandemic. Is there any way that DDPC could help out here?
  - It would require some creative thinking and we would need to investigate further.

**DDPC members voted to approve the motion.**

**MOTION 5: James Traylor explained that Motion 5, as outlined in the meeting packet, was redacted. Motion 5 is not ready to be brought before the Full Council.**

- No questions were asked by the Council.

## **LEADERSHIP REPORTS**

### **Caucus Chair Report- Lisa Severino**

Lisa Severino delivered the Caucus report from June 17, 2020. Report highlights included the following:

- Educational game showing how to use WebEx;
- Review of the agenda, four funding motions, and meeting packet;
- Presentation on SANYS Diversity grant;

- Emerging issues; and
- Update that the next Caucus Meeting will be held on October 28, 2020, hopefully in person.

### **Council Chair Report- James Traylor**

Mr. Traylor delivered the Council Chair report. Report highlights included the following:

- Break down on Deputy Commissioner Marlay's presentation on the current climate of Day Service Programs,
- Introduction of next steps for DDPC collaboration with OPWDD's plan to reopen and reimagine day services, which included:
  - Soliciting input from individuals with IDD and their families throughout the State who were and still are impacted by Day program closures;
  - Provide technical support to provider organizations; and
  - Report back to OPWDD with any findings and/or recommendations.

### **Executive Director Report - Sheila Carey**

Ms. Carey delivered the Executive Director's Report. Report highlights included the following:

- This meeting is the last that Sheila Carey and James Huben will participate in;
- DDPC will schedule an appropriate time for the Council and staff to celebrate their years at DDPC and say "goodbyes";
- As part of the Executive Director's Report, Sheila Carey recommended the Council consider a motion to approve Vicky Hiffa as Acting Executive Director of the DDPC upon Sheila's retirement in the Fall.

### **Motion 6: To approve Vicky Hiffa as Acting Executive Director of the Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC) to take effect in the Fall of 2020 upon the retirement of the current Executive Director, Sheila M. Carey.**

Vicky Hiffa recused herself from the vote.

Lisa Severino made the motion. Deirdre Staley seconded the motion

**DDPC members voted to approve the motion.**

### **Fiscal Report - Kathleen Mazur**

On June 18, 2020, the DDPC approved spending \$2.8 million on four motions.

However, the housing motion is not expected to start until fiscal year 2023. The DDPC is on track to spend down its available balances for federal fiscal years 2018, 2019, and 2020.

**Motion to approve Fiscal Report made by Christine Barker. Lisa Meyer-Fertal seconded the motion.**

**Open Forum/Closing**

The following Council Members spoke during Open Forum:

- David Feickert shared encouraging words about the future DDPC leadership, while seeing people leave DDPC is sad.

No other comments were made. DDPC staff shared the Membership Feedback form via email. The next Full Council Meeting will be held on October 29 and 30, 2020.

**Adjournment** - With no additional business, the DDPC meeting adjourned at 12:47 p.m.

**Motion to adjourn made by Lisa Severino. Peter Cole seconded.**

<b>Council Members Attendance</b>	<b>Full Council - 6/18/20</b>
Shameka Andrews	Yes
Christine Barker	Yes
Peter Cole	Yes
Jen Dahlstrom – Interim Vice Chairperson	Yes
David Feickert	Yes
Lisa Fertal	Yes
Stuart Flaum	Yes
Tamelia Fritz	Yes
Ketrina Hazell	Yes
Megan Meyer	No
Wendy Orzel	Yes
Lisa Severino, Caucus Chairperson	Yes
Deirdre Staley	Yes
Jennifer Thau	No
James Traylor, DDPC Chairperson	Yes
K. Rhoda Wong	Yes
P & A	N/A
Susan Fox (WIHD UCE)	Yes
Joanne Siegel (RFK UCE)	No
Susan Hetherington (SCDD UCE)	Yes
Theodore Kastner – Commissioner/OPWDD	No
Neil Mitchell - OPWDD	Yes
Hirah (Here-a) Mir - OPWDD	Yes
Bronce Perez Matos - OPWDD	No
RuthAnneVisnauskus - Commissioner/DHCR	No
Lisa Irizarry / Paula Vera - DHCR	Yes
Greg Olsen, Acting Executive Director, OFA	No
Colleen Scott – OFA	Yes
Michael Hein –Commissioner - OTDA	No
Tara Wood – OTDA	Yes
Beth Berlin, Interim Commissioner/SED	No
Dora Lee Stanley- SED/ACCES-VR	Yes
Denise Miranda - Exec Director - Justice Center	No
Melinda Dolezal – Justice Center	Yes
Dr. Howard Zucker – Commissioner - DOH	No
Suzanne Swan – DOH	Yes
Melissa Bennett - DOH	Yes
Anthony Annucci-Acting Commissioner/ DOCCS	No
Vacant – DOCCS	
Paul Karas - Commissioner/DOT	No
<b>Presenters/Panelists/Guests</b>	
Katherine Marlay, Deputy Commissioner of the Division of Policy & Program Development OPWDD	



Guests: McKensie Kelly, DOB Elizabeth Lynn, DOB Alison McCarthy Dixie Yonkers Kim Hodges Lisa Kennedy Catherine Holmes Megan Glass Susannah Iadarola, Strong Center for DD	
<b>Staff</b>	
Sheila Carey	Yes
Barbara Ardman	Yes
Kim Berg	Yes
Viktoriia Borsuk	Yes
Kay Broughton	Yes
Michael Deuel	Yes
Jackie Hayes	Yes
Vicky Hiffa	Yes
Jim Huben	Yes
Kathy Mazur	Yes
Jessica Pidgeon	Yes
Linda Speno	Yes
Drew Webster	Yes